Mexican Humanitarian Assistance System

A Monograph

by

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Abstract

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The Mexican military, using its existing capabilities, has been able to successfully deploy in support of international HA/DR missions over the last four decades. While the recipients of this assistance have praised Mexico's contributions to these international efforts, there is room for improvement in how Mexico integrates its forces into international humanitarian responses. This monograph presents an analysis of the Mexican policies, objectives, and strategies in humanitarian assistance. It contrasts Mexico's performance in the humanitarian assistance mission in Haiti following the January 2010 earthquake and suggests three areas in which Mexico could make substantive efforts to improve its humanitarian assistance system. First, Mexico's government should develop policies and doctrine that align Mexico's humanitarian assistance efforts with established international protocols. Second, the federal government should establish an organization with the means to integrate the planning, preparation, and execution of government agencies, the military, and participating non-governmental organizations. Finally, Mexico should pursue the implementation of a training strategy to integrate the preparation of government agencies and military forces to participate in international humanitarian responses and should collect lessons learned from responding elements to further improve training and execution.

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Acknowledgements

Acronyms

CAA	Conference of American Armies
CAMI	Center for Analysis and Management Information
CMC	Civilian-Military Cooperation
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
DoD	Department of Defense
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DR	Disaster Relief
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
FAA	Foreign Assistance Act
HA	Humanitarian Assistance
HA/DR	Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief
HC	Humanitarian Coordinators
HCT	Humanitarian Country Teams
HQ	Head Quarters
IACNDR	Inter-American Committee for the reduction of natural disasters
IADB	Inter-American Defense Board
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IO	International Organizations
JHOC	Joint Humanitarian Operations Course
LEMA	Local Emergency Management Authority
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization in Haiti
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OAS	Organization of American States

OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance
OSOCC	On-site Operations Coordination Centre
PVO	Private Voluntary Organizations
RC/HC	Resident Coordinator and/or Humanitarian Coordinator
SEDENA	Secretariat of National Defense
SEMAR	Secretariat of Navy
SRE	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs
ToT	Training of Trainers
TPU	Training and Partnership Unit
UN	United Nations
UN-CMCoord	United Nations Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNDRO	United Nations Disaster Relief Office
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	US Government
USNORTHCOM	United States North Command

Introduction

On January 12, 2010 at 1703 hours local time, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake occurred in the highly populated region of Ouest, Haiti. The epicenter of the earthquake was about ten miles from the capital city of Port-au-Prince, with the closest commercial airport, Mais Gate, approximately twelve miles away. The international community responded immediately with aid to help an effected civilian population of more than 3 million. The earthquake's impacts were devastating for a country already suffering under decades of political instability: 100,000 collapsed structures and 200,000 more with significant damage; more than 316,000 people killed and another 300,000 injured; and more than 1 million people displaced.[1] The tremor virtually decapitated the Haitian government, destroying the presidential palace and fourteen of sixteen government ministries and claiming the lives of numerous government officials and employees, as well as the head of mission of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and his principal deputy.[2] The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) deployed a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team to coordinate the international response for support to the Haitian government in disaster relief activities.[3] As members of the international community responded, they occupied areas near the Toussaint L'Ouverture International Airport, north of capital and close to the most damaged areas. The main focus of the disaster relief operation was in and around Port-au-Prince city. Based on initial

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[1] Florida Division of Emergency Management, *Operation Haiti Relief, After Action Report*, 2010, 4.

[2] Gary Cecchine et al., *The U.S. Military Response to the 2010 Haiti Earthquake* (RAND, 2013), accessed October 2, 2015, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR300/RR304/RAND_RR304.pdf.

[3] Al Razih, "Haiti Earthquake Flash Appeal," *OCHA*, no. January (2010): 81, accessed October 2, 2015 https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/system/files/documents/files/flash_2010_haiti_screen.pdf.

assessments from the UNDAC team, and in coordination with the Haitian authorities, OCHA requested US$ 575 million for a planning and budgeting horizon of six months.[4]

The Mexican government responded to the disaster within twenty-four hours, sending two airplanes, provided by the Secretariat of Navy (SEMAR) and Secretariat of National Defense (SEDENA), with personnel from specializing in structural damage assessment, search and rescue, medical services, and emergency management. The mission consisted of seventy-six people from various institutions, including the Secretariat of Government's General Coordinator for Civil Protection office, the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, the National Water Commission, SEDENA, SEMAR, the Mexican Social Security Institute, the Mexican Red Cross, and the Civil Protection agencies of Jalisco and Nayarit States. Representatives of private companies and members of the media accompanied the government's team. At the same time, local leaders established collection centers throughout Mexico to collect relief supply donations from Mexico's citizenry.

The Mexican military's response was equally rapid. The Mexican Navy quickly established a shipping route to move necessary supplies to Haiti and distribute it in coordination with the United Nations (UN). [5] The SEDENA evaluation team included with Mexico's first responders, analyzed disaster areas and reported that all of the effort was deployed in the capital city of Port au Prince while Carrefour, a metropolitan community with 800,000 habitants southwest of the capital, had 60,000 people who were living in four community shelters managed by non-governmental organizations (NGO). SEDENA's initial recommendation was to deploy Army field kitchens to support Carrefour's desperate food situation.

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[4] Ibid.

[5] "La Secretaría de Gobernación Envía Misión de Ayuda Humanitaria a La República de Haití | Presidencia de La República," accessed October 2, 2015, http://calderon.presidencia.gob. mx/2010/01/la-secretaria-de-gobernacion-envia-mision-de-ayuda-humanitaria-a-la-republica-de-haiti/.

SEDENA decided to deploy one of the army's field kitchens to support Carrefour but lacked the ability to move it to Haiti. The kitchen is a 40-foot tractor-trailer fitted with equipment capable of preparing 10,000 hot meals a day. The Mexican Air Force's biggest transport airplane, the Lockheed C130 Hercules, was too small to transport the tractor-trailer. Additionally, damage to Haiti's ports meant that the Mexican Navy could not use its ships to transport the kitchen by sea. When the United States' Northern Command established contact with SEDENA as part of their efforts to coordinate their effort with regional partners, SEDENA asked for assistance in deploying the Army's field kitchen to Haiti. With significant coordination between the US Embassy Office of Defense Coordination and SEDENA, the defense secretariat developed a plan for the movement of the kitchen along with supporting material, equipment, and vehicles through the United States Air Force (USAF). [6]

On 6 February, the United States Air Force, the Mexican Air Force, and other elements of SEDENA successfully embarked the army's community kitchen, two 5-ton trucks, and a forklift in a USAF C-5 freighter. The second C-5 arrived at Santa Lucia Air Base on February 7, 2010, loading all the remaining support equipment. The equipment moved by air from Mexico to Jacksonville, Florida, where it was then trans-loaded for movement to Haiti by the US Navy. The kitchen arrived in Haiti on February 18, but did not begin operations until March 1, 2010 after lengthy coordination with local authorities and local social leaders.[7] Over the course of seventy-five days, Mexican Army forces supported the work of the NGOs running local shelters in Carrefour, providing 787,200 hot meals to the Haitian people and distributing 146,200 relief

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[6] The United States Office of Defense Coordination manages all US Department of Defense Security Assistance programs in Mexico, and serves as a principle member of the US Embassy Country Team to advise the Ambassador and advance overall US objectives and Mission goals.

[7] "Gaceta Parlamentaria 22 Apr 2010," accessed November 7, 2015, http://gaceta. diputados.gob.mx/Black/Gaceta/Anteriores/61/2010/abr/20100422-I/OficioII-2.html.

packets, 82,700 liters of water, and emergency medical care to 611 patients.[8] Before Mexican forces departed Haiti on May 15, 2010, the Mexican government decided to donate the mobile kitchen equipment to the Haitian government and provided training to local authorities on its operation.[9]

The Mexican Army's brief but successful operations in Haiti, and earlier operations in the United States in support of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, demonstrate that Mexico can use their extensive experience in internal humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) operations to achieve national policy goals and aspirations in the international realm through support to international disaster relief efforts. However, despite Mexico's immediate deployment of assessment teams, it was more than a month before Mexican aid was on the ground and operating in Haiti. Mexico's problem was not the rapidity of the response, but something else.

SEDENA is no stranger to disaster relief operations. Its success in responding to disasters to date relates directly to its efforts to develop policies and doctrine associated with HA/DR operations, the most important of which is the strategic plan for disaster relief—Plan DN-III-E. The plan contains annexes with specific instructions to different military actors and, because of its size, these annexes are organized into three separate volumes that cover elements of the plan, policies associated with disaster relief, and doctrinal guidance for military participants. The plan describes the concepts and regulations for all levels of command during this kind of operations that take place within Mexico, for which the Mexican Army is typically the first to respond.[10]

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[8] SEDENA, "Comunicado de Prensa May 20 2010," last modified 2010, accessed November 7, 2015, http://www.sedena.gob.mx/servlet/Satellite?c=articulo_C&cid=1393962306960&d=Touch&pagename=sedena%2Farticulo_C%2FSArticuloSinPaginaLayout.

[9] "Gaceta Parlamentaria 22 Apr 2010."

[10] Estado Mayor Defensa Nacional, *Plan DN-III-E: Auxilio a La Poblacion Civil En Casos de Desastre* (Mexico D.F.: Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional, 2004).

SEDENA developed Plan DN-III-E in 1966 when including a new annex in the National Defense Plan designed to address disaster response. That same year, a major flood hit the northeast of the country and SEDENA executed the plan successfully, to great relief of the affected population. Subsequently, SEDENA and the Mexican populace have come to associate all of the activities related to disaster relief with Plan DN-III-E. In 1986, in response to the Mexico City earthquake a year earlier, the Mexican government created the National System of Civil Protection (Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil, SINAPROC), and it is this system through which agencies from all three levels of government coordinate responses to any kind of disaster.[11] SEDENA is part of this national response system, mostly operating in the first phases of the response.

In the last forty years, the Mexican military has executed more than 30 HA/DR operations all over the world and while the military had provided the bulk of the supporting effort, these missions have been led by Mexico´s Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE).[12] The current national defense sector program contemplates the continued participation of military forces in HA/DR. To meet this requirement, SEDENA, which consists of the Mexican Army and Air Force, has a brigade-sized organization stationed in Mexico City ready for commitment to any HA/DR emergency in or outside of Mexico.[13] Therefore, Mexico has demonstrated that it has a well-established ability to respond quickly when disaster strikes.

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[11] Gabriela Vera and David Arellano, "Institutional Design and Organization of the Civil Protection National System in Mexico," accessed March 29, 2016, http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/aspa/unpan000525.pdf.

[12] "Ayuda Humanitaria Plan DN-III-E | Secretaría de La Defensa Nacional | Gobierno | Gob.mx," accessed February 2, 2016, https://www.gob.mx/sedena/acciones-y-programas/ayuda-humanitaria-plan-dn-iii-e.

[13]Estado Mayor Defensa Nacional, *Plan DN-III-E: Auxilio a La Poblacion Civil en Casos de Desastre* (Mexico D.F.: Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional, 2004).

In 2003, SEDENA issued a directive on humanitarian assistance operations abroad as an annex of Plan DN-III-E, with the purpose of defining the legal basis for such operations, and establishing the operating rules, mobilization procedures, task force organization, employment principles, and other general guidance associated with international HA/DR.[14] Unfortunately, while the 2003 directive extended internal operating concepts to international operations, it did not address the challenges associated with such operations. For instance, the 2003 directive did not address OCHA's international humanitarian assistance system or the "cluster" construct under which they operate.[15] Within OCHA's system, the main conduit for military support coordination the embassy's military attaché. In Haiti, however, Mexico's embassy had no military attaché and so the military evaluation teams had to coordinate directly. The directive takes a bilateral approach, and thus does not consider international organizations as United Nations, NGOs, or other countries. Further, it directs coordination to occur between deployed Mexican forces and the host nation military command and uses the military attaché as means to communicate with SEDENA HQ. This command and control structure is different from what typically occurs, as the ambassador leads the Mexican delegation and thus is the one who coordinates with host nation and assigns tasks to the supporting force.

OCHA is usually the agency in charge of bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent international response to emergencies in those countries affected by natural disasters and emergencies. "OCHA is leading the international community's efforts to develop a better architecture for the humanitarian system, including strong in-country humanitarian leaders

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[14] Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional, "Directiva Ayuda Humanitaria en El Extranjero," 2003.

[15] Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations, both UN and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. water, health and logistics.

(Humanitarian Coordinators); representative and inclusive Humanitarian Country Teams."[16] To increase the effectiveness of these responses, OCHA has developed the cluster coordination approach to avoid gaps and overlaps in stakeholders work.[17] The cluster approach consists of sectoral working groups organized by the United Nations to coordinate humanitarian responses and be more effective.[18] The eleven cluster areas—logistics, nutrition, emergency shelter, camp management, health, protection, food security, emergency telecommunication, early recover (construction), education, and sanitation/water/hygiene—are established based on the needs of the situation. Within the UN's design, clusters are established at both the international and country levels, with country cluster representatives conducting coordination at the international level and ensuring that "humanitarian actors build on local capacities and maintain appropriate links" with local stakeholders.[19] The UN's cluster approach, instituted in 2006, pre-dates both Plan-DN-III-E and the establishment of SINAPROC.

Improving their capability to be able to not only deploy rapidly but also operate within an international context is clearly important to Mexico given recent commitments by the Mexican government to provide greater support in response to regional disasters. Recently, Mexico signed an agreement as part of the Commanders Conference of American Armies (CCAA), to follow the CCAA's "Procedures Guide for Army Members CCAA Relief Operations in Disaster 2012." operations. SEDENA concluded that such multinational headquarters is feasible approach and consistent with Mexico's national policy on HA/DR.

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[16] "Coordination | OCHA," accessed September 25, 2015, http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination/overview.

[17] UNOCHA, "OCHA on Message : The Cluster Approach" (2012): 1.

[18] Ibid.

[19] World Healt Organization, "WHO | The Cluster Approach" (World Health Organization, n.d.), accessed March 29, 2016, http://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/tools/manuals/who_field_handbook/annex_7/en/.

As Mexico's experience in Haiti demonstrates, SEDENA has the ability to deploy in less than forty-eight hours to provide basic HA/DR capabilities using their current organization. However, it took three weeks to deploy the Army's field kitchen to Haiti and an additional ten days to coordinate its employment with the larger relief effort. This delay represents not a lack of HA/DR capability or responsiveness, but the absence of the processes and structures necessary to rapidly integrate within the international system. Further, given the number of international HA/DR deployments executed by Mexican military forces in the last four decades, it is clear that there exists no feedback mechanism to capture the lessons associated with these missions and implement changes in policy, organization, or training to improve the next response.

This study addresses how SEDENA might improve its expeditionary HA/DR capability, leveraging both its current capabilities for internal response and the lessons learned on conducting international relief operations gained from their experiences in Haiti and elsewhere. In its earliest stages, this project sought to determine what actions might reduce the *response time* of SEDENA to international HA/DR missions. Subsequent analysis, however, has shown that Mexico does not need a faster response, but rather, more rapid and effective integration with the larger international response effort. Despite success in Haiti, Mexico's response to regional disasters could best be described as *ad hoc*. Thus, this project seeks to recommend ways in which to expand Mexico's effective internal disaster response system to include those concepts associated with the international humanitarian system in order to create an equally effective external response capability. The study explores three specific areas for potential improvement: the adaptation of current internal disaster response policies and plans to support missions outside of Mexico; the development of a joint/interagency system to coordinate HA/DR requirements across multiple constituencies; and the preparation of organizations and personnel to operate as part of that larger international relief system.

Section one describes the international organizations with which Mexico has commitments and which are further related to the international humanitarian assistance system. It

examines the purpose of each of these organizations, how they each interact with the international humanitarian assistance system, and the ways in which SEDENA currently interacts with each. The section also explores the international humanitarian assistance system as envisioned by the United Nations, as well as the UN's role as response coordinator and advisor to those nations affected by natural disasters. In looking at the international humanitarian assistance system, this section seeks to identify those areas that commonly generate friction so that in the next section, specific recommendations can be made regarding the adjustment of Mexico's HA/DR policies.

Section two discuss the current humanitarian assistance policies that guide Mexico's international HA/DR operations. Rather than developing a separate policy for foreign humanitarian assistance, Mexico uses the national system of civil protection—designed to govern internal disaster response operations—to provide humanitarian assistance abroad. However, it is the objectives and strategies established by the National Development Plan (NDP) that should guide the administration of foreign humanitarian assistance in accordance with Mexico's foreign and regional interests. The sectoral plans of the Secretariats of Defense and Foreign Affairs, which implement the NDP in their respective areas, provide detailed strategies to provide humanitarian assistance. It is necessary to establish processes and policies specialized for humanitarian assistance in an international context to be able to align existing government strategies focused on internal response to the strategic objectives of Foreign Affairs. Such a system should allow the Mexican government to learn from their own experiences and other international agencies to improve both internal and external disaster responses. Therefore, this section examines how Mexican agencies might modify their respective doctrines to more responsive to both national *and* international needs. For SEDENA, this means perhaps separating humanitarian assistance from Plan DN-III-E policy and establishing new procedures, principles of employment, and operation that better equip it to act in coordination with the international system of HA/DR.

Section three explores ways in which Mexico might make organizational changes to aid in the implementation of the policy recommendations made in the previous section. As mentioned, Mexico has extensive experience in international humanitarian assistance, sending missions to many different countries since 1972, including: Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Colombia, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Cuba, the United States, Haiti, Dominican Republic, and Venezuela. Because of frequent natural disasters, Mexico has developed a robust National System of Civil Protection to guide its internal response. While internal and international humanitarian assistance missions deal with similar problems, Mexico's civil protection system policies need to be expanded to deal with the international operating environment. To manage policy implementation, Mexico needs a new organization that understands OCHA's operational approach and can mirror that approach in organizing Mexico's contribution to international efforts. This section examines how to create such an organization, focusing on developing an interagency strategy that can coordinate across the different agencies that are capable of providing resources for HA/DR missions and can integrate NGOs that normally cooperate in international responses. Equally important, this section suggests ways in which this proposed organization would collect lessons learned and disseminate these experiences to shape the training of future participants.

Section four analyzes the training needs associated with improving Mexico's integration into international HA/DR responses. While the recurrence of natural disasters in Mexico have helped to develop the robust national system of civil protection to integrate the actions of federal, state, and local municipal government agencies, as well as NGOs and Mexican volunteers, there has been relatively little training to prepare these entities to participate in international responses. Instead, training in Mexico has tended to be technical nature, oriented on practical aspects of responding to disasters within the country. Such training is based on the experiences that Mexican agencies and NGOs have had in their participation in local disasters, and most focus on the national system of civil protection oriented to the tasks of HA/DR in Mexico. However, to better

integrate the participation of Mexican delegations in HA/DR missions in foreign countries, additional training associated with the international system of HA/DR is necessary. OCHA is one potential model for this training, and therefore this section explores how OCHA prepares international militaries to participate in HA/DR missions, and how other countries conduct their own internal preparations for participation in these missions. In particular, this study examines the United States' preparations through training provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Mexican military, using its existing capabilities, has been able to successfully deploy in support of international HA/DR missions over the last four decades. While the recipients of this assistance have praised Mexico's contributions to these international efforts, there is room for improvement in how Mexico integrates its forces into international humanitarian responses.[20] Expansion of Mexico's existing disaster response policies, formulated for internal responses, could improve integration by creating processes that facilitate interagency cooperation and better conform to international norms. Development of an organizational solution to improve joint and interagency coordination can ensure that Mexico's response structurally mirrors international coordinating structures. More importantly, between responses, this organization could guide interagency efforts to develop doctrine, refine policies, and coordinate activities such as planning, training, and capturing lessons learned. Finally, improving Mexico's preparatory efforts by expanding training to include training on international humanitarian assistance operations, organizations, and operating norms, would improve the readiness of Mexican responders—governmental, non-governmental, and volunteers—to contribute more fully to international response efforts.

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[20] Stephen R. Kelly, "When Mexicans Crossed Our Border to Feed Americans in Need - The Washington Post," *The Washington Post*, last modified 2015, accessed October 29, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/when-mexicans-crossed-our-border-to-feed-our-hungry/2015/08/28/347342e4-4cee-11e5-84df-923b3ef1a64b_story.html.

Humanitarian Assistance in the International Arena

Preparation and planning for regional humanitarian assistance operations has become an essential tool within the international community to build partnerships between military organizations, governments, and non-governmental agencies by strengthening professional relationships and improving interoperability. Regional and international organizations routinely host exercises to improve the types of partnerships that allowed the rapid response seen in Haiti. United States Southern Command's annual Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarias exercise, conducted with partners in Central and South America, and a wide array of international and regional organizations, is one such example. By emphasizing common international standards for HA/DR, interactions between national governments and militaries with these organizations, in both training and crisis responses, can be an important source of information on how to organize and prepare at the national level.

Mexico belongs to ninety-two regional and international organizations, three of which are of particular interest regarding humanitarian assistance in Latin America. Therefore, this section examines in detail Mexico's participation in the Organization of American States (OAS), the Conference of American Armies (CAA), and the United Nations. Regional organizations like the OAS and CAA are important because of the commitments made to regional cooperation as a condition of membership. The United Nations, on the other hand, looms large because of its broad influence on international standards for humanitarian relief and its central role in coordinating international responses around the world.

The OAS, charted in Bogota, Colombia in 1948, and entered into force in December 1951, was founded with the objective to achieve among member states "an order of peace and justice, promote their solidarity, strengthen their collaboration and defend its sovereignty, its

territorial integrity and its independence."[21] Similarly, the mission of the diplomatic

representation of Mexico in the OAS is to strengthen the good relations, friendship, solidarity,

and cooperation between Governments and peoples, in accordance with the objectives of foreign

policy set by the Government of Mexico.[22] While initially focused on regional solidarity and

collective security, the OAS has evolved in the last three decades, expanding its goals to include

defending human rights, strengthening democracy, and mitigating natural disasters.

The OAS defines its role in regional responses to natural disasters as providing support

on technical issues and overall coordinator of humanitarian efforts in support of their members.

To realize this function, the OAS established the Inter-American Committee for Natural Disaster

Reduction (IACNDR). This Committee analyzes the policies and strategies associated with

responding to emergencies caused by natural disasters.[23] By collaborating with other institutions,

the committee created an integrated network of information and response that includes the

preparation of pre-investment studies, financing of investments in prevention and reconstruction,

as well as inter-agency protocols for disaster response.[24]

Because the IACNDR is "the principal forum of the Inter-American System for analyzing

issues related to natural and other disasters, including the prevention and mitigation of their

effects, in coordination with the governments of member states" it is an essential resource that

should be used by the Government of Mexico in preparing for and responding to regional

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[21] OAS, "OAS - Organization of American States: Democracy for Peace, Security, and Development," August 1, 2009, accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.oas.org/en/about/who_we_are.asp.

[22] Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, "Presencia de México en la OEA," accessed March 5, 2016, http://mision.sre.gob.mx/oea/index.php/es/historia-de-mexico-en-la-oea.

[23] "International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)," accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.eird.org/esp/revista/No1_2001/pagina27.htm.

[24] "International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)," accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.eird.org/esp/revista/No1_2001/pagina29.htm.

disasters.[25] The IACNDR can be both a source of information on existing vulnerabilities and plans for future disaster responses, and a forum through which the Mexican government can identify the needs of countries that are in the midst of an emergency caused by a natural disaster. Such coordinating activity could help to mitigate issue faced by Mexican forces in Haiti, when implementation of Mexico's relief support was delayed by lengthy coordination on the ground *after* the equipment arrived, rather than concurrently with the equipment's movement. The diplomatic mission of Mexico currently residing within the OAS can both share with other member states the capabilities that Mexico has to offer and can gain insight on the help that is or might be required by other member states.

Another element of the OAS with functions related to HA/DR operations is the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB): The IADB provides OAS member states with technical advice and consultancy services for relief and humanitarian assistance in the case of disasters.[26] The Defense Board contributes to the actions of humanitarian assistance provided to the population impacted by a disaster, in order to reduce the effects of the same and to safeguard the lives of those affected, using a plan that establishes a strategic concept for response, and a database of information to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The IADB's database includes information on the disaster mitigation policies of member states, plans and procedures for humanitarian assistance abroad, and the supporting infrastructure behind that assistance. The IADB's Center for Analysis and Management Information (CAMI) is the agency in charge maintaining the IADB's coordinating network and keeping the database updated. Additionally, CAMI provides analytical services, using information in the database to construct profiles and

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[25] OAS, "Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR) and the Inter-American Strategic Plan for Policy on Vulnerability Reduction, Risk Management, and Disaster Response (IASP)," March 4, 2011, accessed April 5, 2016, http://www.oas.org/dsd/Nat-Dis-Proj/Natdesproject/InterCommit.htm.

[26] Organization of American States General Assemby, "Estatuto de la Junta Interamericana de Defensa" (Washington, DC: OAS, 2006), 4

respond to information requests. This database, and supporting network, is the main center of coordination among OAS members during the response to disasters.[27]

SEMAR and SEDENA maintain permanent representatives to the IADB. This diplomatic representation can participate as liaison within the Inter-American system for disaster, in coordination with the personnel of the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, to acquire information from CAMI for analysis and share the resources that Mexico can offer. Additionally, participation in the IADB provides an opportunity to collectively share the humanitarian assistance lessons learned by member states, and to potentially find inspiration for adjustments in Mexico's HA/DR policies in the shared policy documents of other members.

Mexico is also a member of the Conference of American Armies (CAA), an international military organization composed and directed by armies of the American continent, with the permission of the Governments of their respective countries. The CAA was created in 1960 as an international forum for commanders of the armies of the Western hemisphere. Currently, it is governed by an internal regulation adopted by all the members of the CAA commanders, that directs a two-year process of specialized lectures and exercises sponsored by different armies that culminate with the Commanders Conference of American Armies, which then coordinates and approves the next round of activities for the CAA. The training for each cycle focuses on a compulsory subject approved by the commander's conference held during the previous cycle.[28] The focus for the XXXI cycle, which runs from 2014 to 2015, is that "The American Armies, their contribution to the operations of peacekeeping, disaster relief operations and the new challenges of the 21st century defense, developing procedures to facilitate cooperation and

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[27] Junta Interamericana de Defensa, "Plan Para Mejorar La Orientación y Asesoría de la JID Al Sistema Interamericano En Casos de Desastres," 2012, 6.

[28] "About the CAA - Who We Are," accessed February 2, 2016, https://www.redcea.com/about/SitePages/Who We Are.aspx.

interoperability between Armies members, taking into account their legitimate difference in capabilities, roles and legal framework of each country."[29]

SEDENA's compliance with the goals of the latest CAA Conference nests fully with Mexico's foreign affairs policy: "Expand cooperation against shared challenges of security, migration and natural disasters and strengthen mechanisms for bilateral and multilateral coordination with armed forces of other Nations with diplomatic representation of the Mexican State," as established by the President of the Republic in NDP.[30] Fortunately, SEDENA is in a good position vis-à-vis the XXXI cycle topic, and will be able to contribute with lessons learned through their participation in various humanitarian-related missions.

Forums such as the CAA and the OAS enable open discussion between the armies, which are generally the agencies who provide the bulk of human and material resources to humanitarian assistance missions in cases of natural disaster. Through these discussions, military leaders are able share experiences, find solutions to common problems, and improve overall hemispheric cooperation for HA/DR operations. Unfortunately, SEDENA's participation in the CAA Conference is currently limited to the sharing of their own experiences, but that of the other Mexican governmental agencies involved in these missions. SEDENA is not in a position to share the broader lessons of the Mexican government because it does not have information from other agencies. In fact, there is no single agency responsible for gathering this information and share it across the whole of Mexico's participating organizations.

In the larger international context, it is the UN that is the most important element in the coordination of HA/DR operations. Since its foundation, the UN has collaborated in activities of HA/DR by coordinating the performance of member countries to mitigate the suffering of disaster

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[29] "About the CAA - Mandatory-Themes," accessed February 2, 2016, https://www.redcea.com/about/SitePages/Mandatory-Themes.aspx.

[30] Gobierno Federal, "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo," *Gobierno Federal* (Mexico: Gobierno federal, 2013), 147, accessed October 2, 2015, http://pnd.gob.mx/.

victims. In December 1991, the 78th plenary assembly established the basis that now governs the international humanitarian assistance system with resolution 46/182. The UN's resolution set forth a series of guiding principles, which are: to ensure neutrality; respect principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality; consent of the affected country respecting its sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of states; the affected states has the primary role in initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of HA in their country; cooperation should be in accordance with international and local law; states in proximity to emergencies are urged to participate closely with the affected countries in international effort; HA should be accompanied by a renewal of commitment to economic growth and sustainable development of developing countries; and UN has a central and unique role to play in providing leadership and coordinating the efforts of the international community to support the affected countries.[31]

The UN's approach to HA/DR stresses the importance of being prepared to face disasters in one's own country and being ready to assist other states by developing capacities in disaster prevention and mitigation at the national and regional level and developing earlier warning systems. In addition, the UN establishes a fund to provide the initial response, consolidates appeals for additional funding, and coordinates the international response. To facilitate their own leadership role, the UN Secretary-General provides a high level official, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), to work closely with other organizations and entities of the UN system, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and member states involved in HA/DR activities. To support the office of the UN DR coordinator, an interagency committee is established under the chairmanship of the high level official, with the participation of all operational organizations and a standing invitation to the International Committee of Red Cross, League of Red Cross and Red

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[31] United Nations General Assembly, "Resolution 46/182 Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian Emergency Assistance of the United Nations," *General Assembly-Fourty Sixth Session* (United Nations (UN), 1991), 50.

Crescent Societies, and the International Organization for Migration, and invitations to other relevant non-governmental organizations as appropriate.[32]

Soon after resolution 46/182 was adopted, the Secretary-General established the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA). He also assigned the ERC the status of Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, with offices in New York and Geneva to provide institutional support. In 1998, as part of the Secretary-General's program of reform, DHA was reorganized into the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Its mandate was expanded to include the coordination of humanitarian response, policy development and humanitarian advocacy. OCHA carries out its coordination function primarily through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC),[33] which is chaired by the ERC. Participants include all humanitarian partners, from UN agencies, funds, and programs, to the Red Cross movement and NGOs. The IASC ensures inter-agency decision-making in response to complex emergencies. These responses include needs assessments, consolidated appeals, field coordination arrangements, and the development of humanitarian policies.[34]

OCHA's mission is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors in order to alleviate human suffering in disasters and emergencies; advocate the rights of people in need; promote preparedness and prevention; and facilitate sustainable solutions.[35] OCHA brings with it both a mandate and a set

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[32] Ibid., 51.

[33] Is the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance. It is a unique forum involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. The IASC was established in June 1992 in response to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182 on the strengthening of humanitarian assistance.

[34] (IASC) Interagency Standing Committee, "The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action," 2013, 1.

[35] "Who We Are | OCHA," accessed November 18, 2015, http://www.unocha.org/about-us/who-we-are.

of cumulative experiences unmatched by other organizations, and these enable it to operate as a

neutral convening authority and an agent for change within the international response system.

OCHA's lengthy partnerships with key humanitarian responders and information collectors, such

as the members of the IASC, has been essential to the organization's success.[36] OCHA provides

experienced leadership through Humanitarian Coordinators (HC), Humanitarian Country Teams

(HCT) and sectoral/cluster coordinators in support of national leadership. OCHA helps affected

countries in their making decision process providing information from different sources about

hazards, people's vulnerabilities, in country and regional capacities and means to influence

humanitarian actions, helping to analyze and making this data widely available.[37] The HCT

provides strategic direction to the overall response by facilitating the flow of information between

sector/cluster, country donors, national and international NGO's, governmental entities, civil

society, private sector and international development actors.[38]

The UN's cluster approach, another product of Resolution 46/182, is a key part of

effective international coordination. It approach is designed to address gaps in international

responses and to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian response by building partnerships.[39]

Each cluster focuses on a key sector of humanitarian action—health, logistics, nutrition,

protection, shelter, water/sanitation/hygiene, food security, emergency telecommunications,

education, early recovery, and camp coordination/management. Clusters ensure that international

responses to humanitarian emergencies are predictable and accountable and have clear leadership

by making clearer the division of labor between tasks, and the roles and responsibilities of

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[36] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "OCHA Strategic Plan 2014-2017," 2014, 12.

[37] Ibid., 18.

[38] Ibid., 23.

[39] Inter-Agency Standing Committe, "Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level" (United Nations (UN), 2015), 4.

responding organizations in each of the different areas. It aims to make the international

humanitarian community better organized and more accountable and professional, so that it can

be a better partner for affected people, host Governments, local authorities, local civil society, and

resourcing partners.[40] Clusters provide a clear point of contact and accountability for providing

humanitarian assistance and partnerships between international humanitarian actors, national and

local authorities, and civil society.[41]

      In response to most major natural disasters, the UN deploys a United Nations Disaster

Assessment and Coordination Team, as was the case in Haiti. When there are major international

search and rescue operations to be coordinated, this team establishes an On-site Operations

Coordination Center. These relief coordination tools are deployed in support of the local

Emergency Management Authority, normally at the request of the Humanitarian Coordinator or

Resident Coordinator. Civil-military coordination often takes place within this framework and in

close coordination with the local and national authorities.[42] To promote coordinated participation

of military contingents, OCHA use the Training and Partnership Unit (TPU) to deliver and

sustain its United Nations Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Training

Program catering to the training needs of its beneficiaries within the humanitarian and military

communities.[43]

      OCHA's training programs are a vital part of improving the international response. It has

become increasingly common to see hundreds of organizations of all hues, capacities, and

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[40] Ibid.

[41] UNOCHA, "OCHA on Message : The Cluster Approach."

[42] OCHA Civil Military Coordination Section, "Guidelines On The Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets In Disaster Relief - ' Oslo Guidelines '" 2006, No. November 2006 (2007): 12, accessed October 2, 2015 http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/8706B7B69BD77E00C1257233004F0570-OCHA-Nov2006.pdf.

[43] UN CMCoord/OCHA, "Training & Partnerships | OCHA," accessed January 15, 2016, http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/UN-CMCoord/training-partnerships.

competencies arrive on the scene after rapid onset natural disasters, making any coordination unwieldy and chaotic. Outside of the UN's established standards, there is little commonality on how non-professional humanitarian organizations, private citizen groups, religious organizations, etc., which often have little understanding of, and commitment to the coordination of humanitarian assistance, choose to fit within the response system—and even fewer understand how to work with military response forces. Initially, the humanitarian community was reluctant to leverage huge military resources which could have been at their disposal for fear of militarizing humanitarian responses. More recently, however, it appears that the humanitarian community appears has a more varied interpretation of the 'principle of last resort' for the use of military and civil defense assets under the Oslo guidelines.[44] This further complicates the Mexican Army's ability to respond to international humanitarian crises.

Other breaks in coordinating chains complicate the international response as well. During the response to the Haiti earthquake, OCHA's liaison with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Situation Center should have been at a high-level early on, since the DPKO was already firmly established in Haiti. However, OCHA did not have enough information and internal coordination to respond to DPKO's repeated requests for support.[45] Recognizing that where there are integrated missions in non-conflict countries and where OCHA does not have strong ongoing presence, it is likely that the mission will often take on a humanitarian role, along

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[44] The 'provider of last resort' represents a commitment of cluster leads to do their utmost to ensure an adequate and appropriate response. It is contingent on local context, namely access, security, and availability of funding. Where there are critical gaps in humanitarian response, it is the responsibility of cluster leads to call on all relevant humanitarian partners to address these. If this fails, then the cluster lead as 'provider of last resort' may need to commit itself to filling the gap. Cluster leads are responsible for ensuring that wherever there are significant gaps in the humanitarian response they continue advocacy efforts and explain the constraints to stakeholders.

[45] Abhijit Bhattacharjee and Roberta Lossio, "Evaluation of OCHA Response to the Haiti Earthquake Final Report," *ALNAP Evaluative Report*, January (2011): 68, accessed October 2, 2015, https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/Evaluation of OCHA Response to the Haiti Earthquake.pdf.

with its political and development functions. Clear guidelines do not exist which clarify how in times of major crises which warrants sizeable deployment of OCHA and clusters, the latter's humanitarian role interface with those of the mission.[46]

As described above, the UN's cluster system groups humanitarian organizations, both UN and non-UN, into each of the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. water, health, logistics, etc. IASC designates each of these clusters, and each has clear responsibilities for coordination. The Resident Coordinator and/or Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) and the HCT manage a humanitarian response through the clusters. All clusters have focal points, known as Cluster Lead Agencies, which operate at the global and country level. Globally, Cluster Leads are responsible for strengthening system-wide preparedness and coordinating technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies in their respective sector. In specific countries, Cluster Leads serve as the main contact for a government and the RC/HC. They ensure that humanitarian activities are coordinated and make a difference to people in need. They also act as a 'provider of last resort' in their respective sector. The decisions on how many clusters are required in- country and which organization is best placed to lead each of them are based on the specific needs identified in the response plan. The goal is to clarify the division of labor among all organizations, better defining the roles and responsibilities of humanitarian organizations within the sectors.[47]

In general, the Cluster Coordinator enables cluster partners to respond more effectively to the needs of the affected population than they could do individually by working together in a coordinated manner and in accordance with the Principles of Partnership.[48] The Cluster Coordinator provides leadership and works on behalf of the cluster as a whole, facilitating all

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[46] Ibid., 30.

[47] OCHA, "OCHA on Message : The Cluster Approach," 1.

[48] The Principles of Partnership are equality, transparency, result-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarity, as endorsed by the Global Humanitarian Plataform.

cluster activities and developing and maintaining a strategic vision and operational response plan. He also ensures coordination with other clusters in relation to inter-cluster activities and those issues that span multiple clusters.[49] It is here that the military can most effectively interface with the international response system.

OCHA conducted a study shortly after the Haiti mission and reached several major conclusions regarding the international response, many of which should be of significant interest to SEDENA. For instance, although clusters were activated within the first three days, it took 2-3 weeks for all of the clusters to become fully functional. This delay shows that OCHA's ability to coordinate and relate to local NGOs and humanitarian players remains a challenge in major emergencies, despite its extensive experience.[50] Additionally, the report found that Cluster coordinators needed to be sufficiently briefed and oriented on local institutions and structures prior to the onset of an emergency, and must have the competence to facilitate building relationships with local government and institutions.[51]

The report also suggests that OCHA's difficulties were apparent to military organizations operating in Haiti, who when attending the cluster meetings, were typically taking more strategic guidance from the MINUSTAH and Department of Peacekeeping Operations Deputy, than the Humanitarian Coordinator or OCHA. During their initial response, US Joint Task Force (JTF) units and leaders also integrated and coordinated response activities with MINUSTAH security forces, as well as with the many NGOs already in Haiti or arriving shortly after the disaster.[52] Key to this coordination between the US and MINUSTAH was General Keen's lengthy collegial

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[49] Humanitarian Coordinator, "Operational Guidance Generic Terms of Reference for Cluster," No. September (2010): 1.

[50] Bhattacharjee and Lossio, "Evaluation of OCHA Response to the Haiti Earthquake Final Report," 25.

[51] Ibid., 26.

[52] Cecchine et al., *The US Military Response to the 2010 Haiti Earthquake*, 39.

relationship with MINUSTAH commander, General Floriano Peixoto; their relationship was a foundation for early and continual coordination between MINUSTAH and JTF-Haiti.[53]

SEDENA conducted coordination in Haiti in a similar manner, working directly with local governments and MINUSTAH since Mexico's Directive of Humanitarian Assistance Abroad directed that Mexican forces coordinate with the (defunct) United Nations Disaster Relief Office. This approach by both the US and Mexico increased the turbulence within the international response. However, unlike the US, which has the resources that allow it to bypass the international response frameworks established by the UN, Mexican forces were not postured to do so. Therefore, Mexican humanitarian response policy and doctrine needs to be improved in order to integrate within international responses to a sufficient level to leverage the capabilities inherent within that system.

The United Nations, through the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, has developed a system of humanitarian assistance that tries to coordinate the actions of governmental and non-governmental organizations in areas dominated by chaos. As shown in the case of Haiti, the level of success is achieving these goals can be limited by many factors. These include the lack of preparation by the agents of OCHA and by lack of knowledge among well-intentioned actors. Military missions will typically default to those networks already established with other military actors, as was the case with the Mexican and American military missions in Haiti, if these military forces are not prepared to operate within the international system, or if the international system fails to rapidly incorporate military capabilities. Such direct military-to-military contacts can speed the military's response, but can also further complicate a coordinated international response under the auspices of the United Nations.

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[53] Ibid., 66.

Mexican Humanitarian Assistance Policy and Doctrine

Historically, Mexico's policy on responding to international humanitarian crises has been based largely on systems established to respond to disasters within Mexico itself. Only recently has the federal government begun to modify these policies based on the experiences of Mexican forces operating within the international system. More work is needed however, to ensure that Mexican policy and doctrine related to HA/DR are formulated to account for the particularities of the international system, and in particular, the United Nations' central role in coordinating international responses. This section examines both policy and doctrine related to humanitarian assistance and its relation to Mexico's foreign policy and regional commitments. It analyzes the foreign policy principles contained in the Constitution of Mexico, as well as the objectives and strategies established the National Development Plan, which directs among other things, Mexico's vigorous international cooperation as a "responsible global actor."[54] Also examined are the sectoral plans of Defense, Navy, and Foreign Affairs Secretariats, which provide the HA/DR strategies that Mexico implements and which geographic regions are mostly likely to be recipients of such a commitment.[55] The most important of these is Plan DN-III-E, SEDENA's strategic plan for responding to cases of disaster and which also serves as the general HA/DR response doctrine of the armed forces in Mexico. This document includes as an annex, a directive for how Mexican military forces will provide humanitarian assistance abroad directive.

Mexico's activity within the international system is governed by a set of foreign affairs principles enshrined in the Mexican Constitution that promote the self-determination of peoples, non-intervention, the peaceful settlement of disputes; the prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations, the legal equality of States, international cooperation for development,

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[54]This document elaborates on the role of the federal administration , setting objectives and strategies that will guide the government's actions.

[55] Sectoral programs are established by the Executive Departments to integrate their strategies with the objectives set by the President in the National Development Plan.

and an emphasis on working for international peace and security. The constitution states that only the Senate can authorize the President to deploy national troops outside the boundaries of the country.[56] The principles of foreign affairs and limits on executive power have had a strong influence on the Mexico's history by limiting government's participation in armed conflicts. The constitutional power held by the Senate for the participation of military abroad has been historically applied to HA/DR missions.

A key part of Mexico's National Development Plan is continued emphasis on Mexico's service to the international community. The NDP expresses this service as a central tenant of its foreign affairs policy, noting that Mexico "can be a positive and proactive force in the world, a nation in the service of the best causes of humanity."[57] While the document outlines ways in which Mexico can expand and strengthen its presence in the world, a key component of that strategy is to strengthen its relationships with the US and Canada through a long-term vision that promotes competitiveness and convergence in the region, based on existing complementarities. Put plainly, Mexico is looking for ways to better integrate in the North American region, in ways similar to its close relationships with Central American neighbors, and thus continue to pursue free market strategies while growing complementary aspects such promoting stability and prosperity in the region.[58] During the participation in HA/DR mission at Haiti, SEDENA collaborated with the United States' Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) to transport the Mexican Army's community kitchen. This is an example of the use of strategic relations to solve common problems in the interests of a nation affected by a natural disaster.

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[56] Congreso Constituyente 1917, "Constitución Política de Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos" (Queretaro: Gobierno federal, 1917).

[57] Federal, "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo," 90.

[58] Ibid., 147.

In addition to North America, the NDP also reiterates Mexico's position as an important player in Central America and the Caribbean, by deepening the integration processes already underway and expanding dialogue and cooperation. Mexico wants to continue strengthening diplomatic relations with all countries of the region and remain fully engaged in regional and sub-regional organizations as a means to promote unity around shared values and principles. Mexico's NDP specifically addresses its role in promoting the principles and values such as solidarity in facing natural disasters and respect for the sovereignty and self-determination of the region's countries.[59]

It is, of course, the responsibility of the government's various departments to implement the NDP and thus attain Mexico's goals as a major contributor to security in the Western Hemisphere. The Foreign Affairs Secretariat helps to implement the NDP, in part, through its Foreign Sector Program, which establishes systems to help improve the efficiency and transparency of the special political missions of the UN.[60] The Foreign Sector Program highlights Mexico's commitment to supporting the UN's humanitarian efforts. Yet, as noted earlier, in their response to the Haiti earthquake, Mexico's responding forces—made up primarily of the military—coordinated directly with the Haitian government, MINUSTAH, non-governmental relief organizations, and the delegations from other countries.[61] The ease with which the Mexican military was able to execute their cooperation was no accident. Mexico's National Defense Program establishes mechanisms to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the armed forces of other nations, as well as with diplomatic representations of the Mexican State engaged in humanitarian assistance in support of other nations, as determined by the Federal

[59] Ibid.

[60] Sectoral programs are elaborated by the Executive Departments to integrate their strategies with the objectives set by the President in the National Development Plan.

[61] Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, "Programa Sectorial de Relaciones Exteriores" (Mexico: Gobierno federal, 2013), 27.

Government.[62] SEDENA's primary means for strengthening these multilateral relationships is through its cooperation in international organizations such as OAS and CAA. Where SEDENA and the Foreign Affairs Secretariat have thus far fallen short, is in better integrating their efforts with the United Nations and the international standards established by that organization.

Many types of natural disasters like earthquakes, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and flooding affect Mexico within its own national borders, and these events have helped the government to develop policies and practices to respond to these internal crises. One of the government's first reactions to an internal disaster is the commitment of the armed forces to apply disaster relief. During the 1985 Mexico City earthquake, for instance, the Commission for National Reconstruction decided to create the National System of Civil Protection to better prepare the country to face future disasters.[63] In 2012, Mexico's legislature passed the General Law of Civil Protection, which established detailed disaster response tasks for every organization at the federal, state, and municipal levels. It was this law that directed both SEDENA and SEMAR to execute their respective plans for disaster relief in the case of emergency.[64]

SEDENA's Plan DN-III-E considers three phases of application: preemptive, emergency assistance, and recovery. Every phase of the plan is coordinated with federal, state, and municipal governments. To achieve such coordination, SEDENA established a Coordination Center of Plan DN-III-E Operations at the national level, within the General Staff of National Defense, while

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[62] Secretaria de la Defensa Naciional, "Programa Sectorial de Defensa Nacional" (Mexico: Gobierno federal, 2013), 27.

[63] Comision Nacional de Reconstruccion, *Bases Para El Establecimiento Del Sistema Nacional de Proteccion Civil* (Mexico, 1986), 7, accessed October 2, 2015, http://www. proteccioncivil.gob.mx/work/models/ProteccionCivil/Resource/6/1/images/besnpc.pdf.

[64] Diario Oficial, "*Ley General de Proteccion Civil*", 2007, 9, accessed October 2, 2015, http://www.proteccioncivil.gob.mx/work/models/ProteccionCivil/Resource/6/1/images/lgpc.pdf.

regional or state level affected military regions or zones each established their own, and municipal-level operative units deploy their own coordination center.[65]

When internal disasters strike Mexico, battalion-sized units are the first to respond, with commanders deploying their units to assist as soon as become aware, rather than awaiting orders or official requests. When an event affects more than just a local municipality, leaders at the military region or zone level coordinates all unit activities with state or federal authorities. If the level of emergency exceeds local or regional capabilities, SEDENA deploys units from the surrounding area or its special Support Force for Disaster Relief. This force is a uniquely task organized with a headquarters element and both a ground component and an air component. The ground component includes the Task Force Mexico Valley, a battalion size unit that changes every day, equipped with basic tools to support any part of the country. If warranted, SEDENA can add additional forces—such as military police, paratroopers, or Special Forces—to provide for a more robust response. The ground component also includes the "services group," which integrates military elements that provide services like medical support, field kitchens, and temporary shelters. The last element with the ground component is an engineering group. The engineering group is a company-sized unit equipped with specialized tools, heavy equipment, water purifiers, and field bridges. The air component of the Support Force for Disaster Relief consists of a coordinating headquarters and staff, several air coordination teams, and a mix of fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft.[66]

In 2003, Mexico's Defense Secretariat issued a directive for human assistance in foreign countries with the purpose to setting procedural guidelines for supporting military personnel. This directive described the legal foundations of such responses, humanitarian assistance request

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[65] Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional, "Plan DN-III-E: Auxilio a la Poblacion Civil en Casos de Desastre," 11–16.

[66] Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional, *Plan DN-III-E Tome I*, 263–289.

procedures to guide military attachés, the organization of the military task force, principles of employment, activities, and administrative arrangements.[67] However, the real significance of this document is that all of the relationships described within it are with the host nation, while there is no mention of OCHA or the UN's cluster system. Within this framework, Mexico's primary coordination interface is the military attaché, yet in Haiti, there was no military attaché so Mexico's evaluation teams had to conduct direct coordination. Additionally, the directive describes bilateral relationships and does not take into consideration international organizations such as the UN or NGOs, or the responding elements of other countries.

By describing the coordination of Mexico's response forces directly with the host Nation command, with the military attaché as the communications link back to SEDENA HQ, the directive establishes a chain of command that is markedly different from the way these operations typically take place on the ground. Normally, the ambassador leads coordination with the host country's government, as was the case in Haiti. The directive suggested by this arrangement may lead to circumstances that complicate coordination efforts during a humanitarian response.

The response activities proposed by directive are structured so as to mirror the actions of Mexico's armed forces in their responses to domestic disaster relief—initial evaluation, search and rescue, medical attention, meal preparation and distribution, work debris removal and the restoration of roads and temporary shelter management. While these activities are common in practically every disaster response, the directive again does not take into consideration OCHA's robust cluster system framework, and thus may inhibit Mexico's ability to organize their response effort to fit within this well-established system.

Mexico has a vision of collaboration and working together within the framework of the United Nations. However, the priority that Mexico attaches to bilateral relations in matters of humanitarian assistance have led to confusion on the role played by the UN in the international

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[67] Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional, "Directiva Ayuda Humanitaria en el Extranjero."

system. While OCHA recognizes that the chaos that reigns in situations such as Haiti hampers its ability to establish the coordination required, it still provides a unified approach that can lessen those difficulties. Instead of narrow policies focused on bilateral arrangements and internal response procedures, Mexico should strengthen international cooperation as the core of its foreign policy, especially in regards to its efforts to be a responsible global actor. Mexico's policies such as the National Development Plan and the additions to Plan DN-III-E have clearly established its willingness to participate in missions of humanitarian assistance as part of a broader effort to increase its contributions to regional security and stability. However more needs to be done adapt these policies to the growing body of established international standards.

The National Development Plan 2013-2018 identifies responsibilities of Mexico in the area of humanitarian assistance with other countries and regions. The countries of Central America and the Caribbean are those in which Mexico is likely to focus its efforts. To accomplish this policy's objectives while improving its internationalist approach, Mexico should adopt some basic strategies. First, Mexico should expand and strengthen international development cooperation with strategic countries and the Central American and the Caribbean regions, by promoting the expansion of resources that contribute to the prosperity and stability of those regions. Mexico should increase south-south and horizontal cooperation in priority regions, and promote triangular cooperation with strategic partners to further that prosperity and stability. Mexico should also be a regular participant in all activities for coordinating disaster response and as the largest country in the region, take the regional lead on coordinating requests for humanitarian assistance with the United Nations.

An integral part of accepting this leadership role is for Mexico to begin formulating its policies regarding external humanitarian assistance to comport with the generally recognized standards of the United Nations rather than continuing to create policies that mirror its internal mechanisms. This would include modifying within existing policy Mexico's approach to coordination and collaboration with international agencies like OCHA, the World Health

Organization (WHO), and the International Red Cross, as well as developing supporting doctrine that integrates with the international systems agreed to by these organization.

This suggests that SEDENA must separate from Plan DN-III-E the doctrine of external humanitarian assistance, to be able to align with federal policies and existing international agreements when function in areas outside of those covered by the national system of civil protection and ensure that procedures, planning, and operating principles are consistent with the foreign policy of Mexico and guidelines on the use of foreign military and civil defense assets in disaster relief. Further, to help strengthen Mexico's capability to effectively respond, SEDENA should consider developing doctrine that establishes principles of coordination and interagency cooperation that brings internal response procedures in line with international methods and operating principles wherever possible.

This policy formulation must consider the international treaties in which Mexico participates, international organizations such as OAS and UN, the international humanitarian system led by OCHA and bilateral relations with countries potentially receive assistance from Mexico. The analysis of these conditions should enable the planning of future operations and allow Mexico to respond quickly to requests for help.

However, changes in policy and doctrine alone will not achieve the results desired. In order to make these policies effective, Mexico needs to address how it organizes to prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises both within and outside of Mexico. The government must address how it establishes a system of internal humanitarian assistance that integrates a wide range of federal agencies, NGOs, and domestic partners that are commonly involved in humanitarian aid missions in Mexico. A lead agency should coordinate this system, one that can effectively harness the experience and knowledge of the subject gained over the last three decades, and can then incorporate that learning into new doctrine and policy for its members. This experience and knowledge must then influence future doctrine that can be shared among all of its members. Some suggestions for how to do this will be explored in the next section.

Organizing for Humanitarian Assistance

The Mexican government has extensive experience dealing with humanitarian disasters within its own borders, but needs to be better prepared to deal with humanitarian assistance missions in a foreign country by implementing a system that similar to that used in civil protection within the country but also taking into consideration the international system with which it must integrate. This means that Mexico should consider how to leverage, wherever possible the elements of the international system, such as OCHA's organizing principles, humanitarian coordinators, sectoral/cluster coordinators, methods of assessment and coordination, and the use of foreign military and civil defense assets in accordance with the disaster relief "Oslo Guidelines". While Mexico's federal system differs from that of the United Nations or OCHA, the ways in which the United Nations creates collaborative communities of practice, and systems for adjudicating interests among many parties, provides a good model for formulating similar systems within more formal governmental structures.

The Secretariat of Foreign Affairs is the federal government agency responsible for the oversight of HA/DR operations with the resources provided by the Mexican state and civil society. As discussed in the case of Haiti, the Secretariats of National Defense and Navy are the components that provide the primary means of support for these operations. However, NGOs like the Mexican Red Cross and the International Red Cross also routinely provide support during Mexico's responses to foreign disasters. Additionally, other agencies of the federal government and some states also provide different types of support as rescuers, medical cells, and the collection and distribution of food. Each time that Mexico is required to deploy a HA/DR support mission, a task force is organized in Mexico City and it is deployed under the command of the Ambassador.[68] While this procedure has generally been successful, in large part because the

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[68] "La Secretaría de Gobernación Envía Misión de Ayuda Humanitaria a La República de Haití | Presidencia de La República."

participating teams usually have significant experience from supporting these types of missions in Mexico, it also generates friction because the participants are less familiar with operating within the international response system. Such frictions can be prevented by applying the lessons learned from these missions and those of other countries and international organizations.

Although the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, through the Directorate General for Global Issues, is responsible for coordinating humanitarian assistance, this does not mean that the secretariat engages in interagency coordination.[69] Instead, their main function is to propose a general plan. The Secretariat of National Defense, through the Staff of the National Defense, maintains liaison with other Federal agencies for the development of joint tasks. The Operations Section, Subsection Civil Protection in the Secretariat of National Defense Staff is responsible for coordinating the plan and proposing specific actions in matters of humanitarian assistance.[70] The Navy has a similar organization, using its General Staff to coordinate humanitarian assistance activities for the secretariat.[71] Meanwhile the Secretariat of Governance through the general coordination of civil protection is in charge for coordinating all activities of the national civil protection system but does not consider the activities of international HA / DR.[72]

The result of this compartmentation and decentralization of the HA/DR functions in Mexican federal government prevents standardization of procedures and training across the secretariats, and inhibits the sharing of lessons learned. Mexico would benefit from the

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[69] Gobierno Federal, "Manual General de Organizacion de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores" (Mexico DF: Gobierno Federal, 2003), 67.

[70] Gobierno Federal, "Manual de Organizacion General de la Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional" (Mexico DF: Gobierno Federal, 2009), 7.

[71] Gobierno Federal, "Manual General de Organización de La Secretaria de Marina" (Mexico: Gobierno federal, 2004), 21, accessed February 25, 2016, http://www.inea.gob.mx/index.php/normateca-interna-nueva/nors-nva-nor-sus-op/alias-dir-planea-admon-eval-dif.html.

[72] Gobierno Federal, "Manual de Organizacion General de La Secretaria de Gobernacion," *Diario Oficial* (Mexico: Gobierno federal, 2015), 74.

establishment of one entity to carry out coordination across the governments various agencies and with the international system of the UN. The system of humanitarian assistance in a foreign country must have principles of organization and coordination between the various participants. Common procedures are necessary to realize the coordination of the participants and ensure international and national system collaborate effectively. In Mexico, the humanitarian assistance system must be led by the secretariat of foreign affairs who is currently in charge of coordinating these activities. However, the creation of an additional entity to coordinate policy, doctrine, training, and response operations could help to ensure that these aspects are fully at the federal level.

Such an entity could bring with it several benefits. By integrating efforts across the government, this coordinating body could establish unity of purpose and effort, unity of command, common procedures, and an inclusive work environment, and thus help any disaster response ensure that the strategic objectives within the Mexican foreign affairs policy are reached. Such an entity could also help the government achieve economies of scale by coordinating the training of participants in humanitarian assistance teams across the government, instituting shared humanitarian assistance doctrine, establishing standards for equipment and communications, and developing interagency response exercises. During operations, such an agency could also act as a bridge for the government's coordination with national and international NGOs, identify lessons learned, and coordinate the government's response across the various government agencies.

To integrate lessons learned, it is necessary to establish an organization at the federal level that can collect and distribute these lessons to all agencies involved. The United Nations, through OCHA, has implemented a system of HA/DR in which it deploys numerous teams to the affected country, teams that are responsible to advise and assist in the coordination and support provided by other countries, international organizations, and NGOs. OCHA, in addition to its advisory and coordinating tasks, carries out an analysis of the performance of the international

system of HA/DR. The analysis allows it to determine the most common mistakes of the international delegations. These experiences are then used to generate changes in the procedures of OCHA and distributed to all countries through reports and training recommendations for civilian and military commonly involved in these missions.[73] Currently in Mexico, the study of and training for HA/DR is the responsibility of each agency.

Fortunately, the creation of this vital coordinating body does not mean the creation of a new bureau, agency, or secretariat. Instead, the United Nations again provides a model for incorporating the capabilities that are already resident within Mexico's federal government. The UN's Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is the primary mechanism for interagency coordination relating to humanitarian assistance at the global level. It is a unique interagency forum for coordination, policy development, and decision-making involving key United Nations and non-UN humanitarian partners. Under the leadership of the ERC, the IASC develops humanitarian policies, agrees on a clear division of responsibility for the various aspects of humanitarian assistance, identities and addresses gaps in response, and advocates for effective application of humanitarian principles. The model of organization of IASC is suitable to be adopted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Directorate General for Global Issues could lead a similar interagency committee for Humanitarian Assistance to coordinate across the Mexican government and its routine international partners.[74]

The UN's IASC limits its membership to key United Nations and non-United Nations humanitarian partners. IASC current members are: the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations

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[73] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Thematic Areas: Evaluations of Humanitarian Response | OCHA," accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/policy/thematic-areas/evaluations-of-humanitarian-response/overview.

[74] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination UNDAC Field Handbook," 2013, 6.

Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Program (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and OCHA. IASC Standing Invitees are the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, InterAction, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR), the Office of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, and the World Bank.[75] Mexico's committee membership would be similar, including the National System of Civil Protection, SEDENA, SEMAR, the Secretariat of Health, the Secretariat of Social Development, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Mexican Red Cross, as well as Mexico's traditional NGO partners with experience in HA/DR operations.

The UN's IASC focuses its efforts on developing and agreeing on system-wide humanitarian policies, allocating responsibilities among agencies in humanitarian programs, developing an agreed upon common ethical framework for all humanitarian activities, advocating for common humanitarian principles to parties outside the committee, identifying areas where gaps in mandates or lack of operational capacity exist, and resolving disputes about and between humanitarian agencies on system-wide humanitarian issues.[76] Likewise, a Mexican interagency committee on humanitarian assistance could develop government-wide systems and policies for humanitarian assistance, establish a national HA/DR doctrine, narrow the gaps between Mexico's domestic and international response standards, collect and disseminate lessons learned from past HA/DR missions, coordinate exercises and training among the government's participating

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[75] Ibid., 7.

[76] Ibid.

agencies, and lead the organizing of the government's collective response to international

humanitarian assistance requests.

Training for Humanitarian Assistance

As has been suggested in the previous sections, it is essential that Mexican delegations of HA/DR responders possess a knowledge of the international humanitarian assistance system. The training of military personnel and members of other agencies is currently limited to their participation in Mexico's National System of Civil Protection. While this training allows them to perform their duties efficiently in response to domestic crises, it has proven insufficient in preparing Mexico's military forces and government agencies to operate in coordination with OCHA, international partners, and non-governmental organizations outside of Mexico. Instead, Mexico's current system of HA/DR training provides only for participation in the National System of Civil Protection, which coordinates across federal, state and municipal authorities.

To provide training for members of Mexico's domestic response team, the National System of Civil Protection operates the National School of Civil Protection, which has the mission of contributing to the development of human resources in the field of civil protection. The school focuses on integrated risk management and is charged with the accreditation of technicians, professionals and specialists involved in the area.[77] The school teaches courses in: the administration of temporary shelters, analysis of risks and resources for real estate, civil protection, basic elements of civil protection for municipal officials, design scenarios and drills, basic formation of brigades of civil protection, maps of risks and municipal resources, workshops for internal program of civil protection, post-disaster psychological preparation, and draft decision making. These courses are designed to integrate the efforts of the federation, states, municipalities, and society to minimize the effects of natural disasters in Mexico within the national system of civil protection.[78] This training is very effective in integrating governmental

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[77] "Escuela Nacional de Proteccion Civil Mexico," accessed February 25, 2016, http://www.enaproc-cenapred.gob.mx/mision.html#mision.

[78] "Cursos Escuela Naciona de Proteccion Civil," accessed February 25, 2016, http://www.cenapred.gob.mx/es/dirCapacitacion/Informacion/.

agencies and NGOs in the National System of Civil Protection, but it does not make any reference to the international system as promulgated by the United Nations and OCHA.

For its part, the Mexican army conducts its own training related domestic disaster response, with the participation of the units identified in Plan DN-III-E executing battalion-size drills for deploying in support of the civilian population in response to a disaster. During these drills, the executing unit is organized into support teams focused on coordination and liaison, security of affected areas, shelter control and administration, logistical support, and search and rescue. The training varies according to the risk analysis of the area where the unit would operate.[79] As a result of this training, a battalion can manage a disaster within areas as small as villages or larger rural areas. However, these battalions receive no training on operating within the international system.

That is not to say that the Mexican military has no experience conducting humanitarian assistance operations outside of the country. In fact, the Mexican military has significant experience in the international arena, including more than 30 HA/DR operations all over the world. As an example, the Mexican military offered its services in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The 2005 storm was the most destructive natural disaster in U.S. history and included both significant destruction wrought by the hurricane itself, as well as a catastrophic flood caused by widespread failure of the levy systems in and around New Orleans. In response, Mexico's military provided sailors who helped to remove debris and move supplies along the Mississippi coast, and two Mexican Army field kitchens, which served 170,000 meals during their deployment to the former Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. Mexican forces also assisted in the distribution and management of more than 184,000 tons of supplies. The medical team—comprised of three doctors, three dentists, three nurses and three paramedics—conducted 134 medical evaluations, performed 526 medical consultations, and provided 363 ambulatory

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[79] Secretariat of National Defense, *Plan DN-III-E Tome I* (Mexico DF, 2004), 25–41.

nursing procedures.[80] Since Katrina, most of Mexico's international missions have been small in size and duration, with the military response to Haiti's earthquake in January, 2010 as the notable exception. However, the experiences from neither Katrina nor Haiti were capitalized on in training or doctrine development, and in both cases, the responding task forces were organized with different units so that the experience was scattered.

More recently, the Mexican Army's quartermaster service gained extensive experience organizing the army's community kitchen and operating it over an extended period of time. Over the last two years, 2,547 military elements installed 336 community kitchens in 331 communities across forty-eight municipalities, providing more than 300,000 rations, benefiting 161,012 people in the states of Veracruz and Guerrero.[81] This particular action demonstrates the capabilities developed by the quartermaster service to provide humanitarian assistance, but because this event occurred in isolation, it doesn't help to establish the procedures necessary for these units to integrate their activities in the Food Security Cluster of an OCHA-led international humanitarian response.[82]

As these instances suggest, the Mexican military's experiences and training are related primarily to the care of domestic needs. Participation in international missions has added to this experience but the military's support could be greatly improved by a more deliberate effort to prepare military personnel to operate in the international environment by training them on the

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[80] "President Fox Sends New Message about Disaster Caused by Hurricane Katrina," accessed February 25, 2016, http://fox.presidencia.gob.mx/en/activities/speeches/ ?contenido=20654&pagina=1.

[81] Presidencia de la Republica, "3er Informe de Gobierno" (Mexico: Gobierno federal, 2015), 65.

[82] Food Security Clusters coordinate the food security response in humanitarian emergencies by addressing the issues of food availability, access and utilization. The FSC works directly with its partners and stakeholders that include international NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, other cluster lead agencies, UN organizations, Governments and Donors. The FSC was formally endorsed by the Inter Agency Standing Committee.

particulars of the international humanitarian assistance system. Fortunately, there are already several established means available to the Mexican government to achieve this end.

Mexico could choose to turn directly to the source of today's international response framework, the United Nations. For instance, OCHA runs a program called the Training and Partnership Unit (TPU), which establishes partnerships with various organizations around the world, allowing OCHA to deliver and sustain its United Nations Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination Training Program (UN-CMCoord). UN-CMCoord caters to the training needs of its beneficiaries within both humanitarian assistance and military communities globally. The core of their training products consists of four training courses: the base UN-CMCoord Course, the Field Course, the Training of Trainers (ToT) Course, and the Familiarization Course. These courses help to familiarize a wide range of HA/DR responders with medium by which training beneficiaries are familiarized with the general principles of humanitarian civil-military coordination and its practical applications in the field. The benefit of these courses is that the UN selects participants to reflect the diversity of actors in the field within both the humanitarian and military communities. The Mexican military and other federal agencies could leverage this training system to increase contacts with the broader international humanitarian assistance community and apply the lessons learned here in their own internal military and governmental training.[83]

The base UN-CMCoord Course is designed to improve the effectiveness of international relief operations and promote effective humanitarian-military relationships by raising mutual awareness and understanding of the roles of military and humanitarian actors in emergencies. The course seeks to create awareness and understanding among participants on the basic concepts and principles of civil-military coordination. The course is designed for both military and civilian organizations with experience in emergency response, and in fact takes on a 50-50 mix of

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[83] CMCoord/OCHA, "Training & Partnerships | OCHA."

humanitarian organizations and military participants to ensure balance and diversity in the course where participants are the primary resource persons. This mix means that representatives of governments, UN agencies, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the military are able to share experiences and openly discuss operational issues in an academic environment conducive to learning.[84] The UN-CMCoord Field course is a more advanced version of this course. Participation in the base course could allow Mexican military to understand better the international environment in HA/DR missions and should be mandatory for at least one of the staff members of the designated Task Force.

The Training of Trainers Course is designed to develop a pool of trained facilitators that could be tapped to facilitate and deliver courses around the world. The course objective is to train potential facilitators on the methodology in facilitating civil-military coordination courses using updated curriculum, modules, and key messages.[85] This course would be of greatest interest to SEDENA because it would allow the military to replicate UN civil-military coordination education within its own military training programs.

The Familiarization Course is a more general course that familiarizes participants on the concept of civil-military coordination, its principles and practical applications in natural disasters and complex emergencies, and existing international guidelines for humanitarian assistance. The course is designed for key government officials and staff of international humanitarian organizations, including officials from National Disaster Management Organizations, defense establishments, foreign affairs, armed forces and other civilian agencies who are principally responsible for emergency response planning, policy formulation and operations doctrine

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[84] OCHA Civil Military Coordination Section, "United Nations Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Course," 2015.

[85] OCHA Civil Military Coordination Section, "United Nations Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Training of Trainers (ToT) Course Factsheet" (OCHA, 2015).

development in emergency response operations.[86] Foreign Affairs personnel and other civilians designated by the Mexican government to plan, prepare, and implement HA/DR activities should take this training in order to coordinate effectively with Mexican military personal and OCHA. For instance, if Mexico implemented the recommendation to establish an interagency coordinating body like the IASC, its members would be ideal candidates for this particular training.

Beyond the training available from the UN, Mexico could look to other partners with extensive humanitarian assistance experience at the international level for training ideas and potentially assistance. For instance, The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) runs the Office of Civil Military Cooperation (CMC) as its principle means of cooperating with the Department of Defense (DoD). This office runs includes the CMC Learning and Outreach Team, which coordinates a variety of training and learning activities for both USAID and DoD audiences, including a variety of instructor-led programs and the facilitation of USAID participation in DoD exercises. Currently, SEDENA does not conduct large-scale, interagency exercises for HA/DR. However, SEDENA could adapt its smaller scale Plan DN-III-E exercises, and if coupled with knowledge acquired in UN CMCoord courses, would develop similar intergovernmental exercises as those conducted in the US.

Another training activity of USAID is the Development in Vulnerable Environments (DIVE) course for US military audiences, which is designed to promote DoD's understanding of USAID's unique objectives, roles and capabilities. The course features interactive methods designed to capture DoD participants' experiences and fully engage them in the application of concepts presented in the course. The course offers many examples of activities USAID

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[86] OCHA Civil Military Coordination Section, "United Nations Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Familiarisation Course Factsheet" (OCHA, 2015).

implements worldwide, including those that highlight civilian - military cooperation.[87] This

particular program provides an excellent model for how an organization with the function of

leading HA/DR missions abroad can share their experience and knowledge with other agencies to

reduce frictions in the field.

The US government's lead for international disaster response, USAID's Office of Foreign

Disaster Assistance (OFDA) created the Joint Humanitarian Operations Course at the request of

the DoD. The course was established for select US military leaders and planners to discuss the

relationship between USAID/OFDA and its partners. The course helps participants become

familiar with US international disaster response structures, relevant offices, policies, mandates,

and roles and responsibilities. It also helps identify areas of mutual coordination and cooperation

between US civilian agencies and the US military, including best practices and lessons learned,

and allows military personnel to become familiar with the international disaster response system,

including the role of the host nation, international and NGO's, and UN agencies.[88] This course is

a good example of interagency integration training, however, because Mexico has not established

a single agency responsible for managing the international HA/DR response system, such an

entity would likely need to be created in order to develop a similar program.

These example training systems offer insights into potential approaches that could be

adopted by the Mexican military to achieve three primary training objectives. First, Mexico's

military responders and civilian overseers need technical training on the practical activities

carried out for the benefit of the population. Training in the practical aspects of activities such as

search and rescue, medical care, and food distribution is already well developed and there are

several organizations responsible for providing it. However, a training approach like that

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[87] USAID, "Development in Vulnerable Environments (DIVE 1.0) | U.S. Agency for International Development," accessed January 15, 2016, https://www.usaid.gov/dive.

[88] Ibid.

executed by the UN and USAID would provide additional insights on the conduct of those activities within an international framework like the UN cluster system. Furthermore, Mexico's military could improve this training by including basic courses on the various languages in the region throughout the region.

Additionally, Mexico needs training on how to organize, develop, execute, and sustain interagency cooperation and collaboration amidst the chaos of a humanitarian crisis. Currently, there is no interagency training for Mexico's responders, and instead, individual organizations develop doctrine and train on that doctrine in isolation. Other organizations and countries with significant experience in interagency coordination, like OCHA and USAID, could be used as models not only for developing systems for interagency collaboration, but also for training interagency partners in operating within such a system.

Finally, Mexico must develop training to help Mexico's own interagency elements coordinate actions with other national delegations, international agencies, NGOs, and local governments. This training should focus on establishing coordination mechanisms that fit within accepted international response frameworks and should help to build those coordination networks prior to a crisis response.

Conclusion

When first conceiving this project, the objective was simply to find ways to reduce the response time of the Mexican army in humanitarian aid missions. The intention was to analyze the participation of Mexico in the response to the humanitarian crisis precipitated by the Haitian earthquake of 2010, in which SEDENA participated with the deployment of a community kitchen, to identify specific areas of opportunity for improvement in the Mexican Army's readiness for these kinds of missions. However, the analysis of Mexico's policies and doctrine related to humanitarian assistance and the international humanitarian assistance system established by the UN suggest that the problem lies, not simply with the Army, but with a more wide scale lack of integration across the federal government that hampers coordinated execution and prevents Mexico's responders from transforming experiences into learning for all the agencies involved.

Mexico's interest to participate in missions abroad has increased in recent years, in response to a growing desire to be a more active and responsible member of the international community. In Mexico's defense policies, two ways in which the military can be used to collaborate in responsible participation within the international community is through multinational peace operations and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operations. Since the use of force abroad to conduct peace enforcement or peace keeping operations conflicts with the principles of foreign policy established in the Constitution of the United Mexican States, HA/DR operations provide a more acceptable use of the Mexican military in the furtherance of Mexico's foreign policy objectives.

The participation of the Mexican delegation in HA/DR operations in Haiti confirmed that the Mexican government has the physical ability to provide such support effectively in countries near Mexico. However, the way in which the humanitarian assistance response system is currently organized could be vastly improved by adapting policies, joint and interagency training,

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and organizational oversight to better confirm to accepted international practices. Mexico needs a structure that allows the federal government to prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises in an integrated fashion and to collect the knowledge and experience gained in those responses, including Mexico's experiences of the last 40 years, to continually improve future responses. As John Gaddis suggests:

Interpret the past for the purposes of the present with a view to managing the future, but to do so without suspending the capacity to assess the particular circumstances in which one might to act, or the relevance of past actions to them.[89]

If Mexico does establish a new body to coordinate and integrate HA/DR responses across the government, this body must include an agency tasked with capturing the lessons of the past and turning them into knowledge, as well as identifying a single agency to oversee the planning of operations across the government. This planning should include determining the make of the responding interagency task force, establishing coordination channels with the Chief of Mission and mission staff who have the experience and knowledge to lead the mission, promulgating knowledge of the system among all the agencies and NGOs participating, and generating post-mission reports to evaluate execution and recommend changes in policy/doctrine, organization, and training.

Knowledge generated by Mexico's participation in international HA/DR operations should not only be disseminated domestically, but should also be shared within the international system through avenues such as OCHA's Training and Partnership Unit program and forums such as the Inter-American Defense Board. Developing a partnership between these external systems and the National School of Civil Protection could help to bridge knowledge sharing internally and externally. Just as importantly, the knowledge gained must be codified in the literature that governs how Mexico's military and governmental agencies will organize and

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[89]John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 11, 12.

operate in support of humanitarian assistance operations. That literature should strive to conform with internationally recognized principles of operation and organization that guide the use of foreign military and civil defense assets in disaster relief. By capturing knowledge within Mexico's guiding literature, SEDENA will be able to adapt its own internal systems, and be better able to integrate with national and international agencies, thus facilitating interagency and international coordination.

If predictions are correct, the current warming of the planet—whether natural or manmade—will likely result in an increase in both the intensity and periodicity of natural disasters in the future. That postulation suggests that the need for effective international humanitarian assistance responses will also increase. To be a responsible member of the international community, all nations involved in the international effort to recover from such tragedies should seek to improve their ability to coordinate and cooperate with a wide variety of government, non-governmental, and private organizations. Mexico enjoys the benefit of significant experience in domestic response. Now is the time to adapt and extend this capability to the international arena.

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